

VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

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It's YOUR Newspaper

Santa Ana Fueled Fires Burn Through the Valley

By SASHA SANTACRUZ
STAFF WRITER

Two wildfires fueled by the strong Santa Ana winds are wreaking havoc on the San Fernando Valley so far destroying more than 10,000 acres.

Shortly after 2 a.m. Sunday, the clouds over Lake View Terrace became a dark, black smoke. Residents nearby

believed it to be something small.

"I noticed how it was getting dark, but more than anything the smell was overwhelming," said Denise Espinoza. "I just figured it's nothing too big, it will go away."

The Marek fire, which burned nearly 5,000 acres near Lake View Terrace, is 70 percent contained as

of Tuesday, according to the Los Angeles Fire Department.

The LAFD, workers from the Los Angeles National Forrest, Los Angeles Police Department and County Park set up a 'camp in a box' at Hanson Dam, which comprises of several trailers housing personnel, information, offices and LAPD.

Fire fighters were laying out cots off to the side of their fire trucks, while others were sleeping in tents on Hansen Dam grounds.

They had updated reports every 12-hours to inform the staff on the situation and what they would be up against.

Many of the residents of Little

Tujunga, Kagel and Lopez canyons, who were evacuated went to relatives homes or to hotels. Those who had nowhere else to go went to San Fernando or Sylmar high schools.

"I got my two kids, wife and father, and came out here [San Fernando H.S.]," said Juan Amaya, 36. "They have been really great here and helping everyone feel comfortable."

The relentless winds and dry conditions also contributed to the outbreak of a wildfire in the Porter Ranch. By Tuesday morning, the fire had nearly doubled in size, burning through 5,000 acre. Hundreds were evacuated.

Stretches of the 210 and 118 freeways were closed down, causing major traffic and exasperating rush hour as motorists searched for alternate routes home. The chaos of people turning back on the 118 led to the death of one person Monday in a head-on collision, causing further problems for the evacuation effort.

Shepherd of the Hills Church in Porter Ranch opened more than just their doors to the residents, offering a place to sleep, a location to house pets and a play area for children.

"We've had a great response from the people," said Mike Johnson, a volunteer at Shepherd of the Hills on Monday night. "We served dinner to about 1,000 people."

The American Red Cross sent volunteers to disaster relief areas as a support unit for those who were affected by the fires.

"This is their home and we want them to feel that way the moment they step inside," said volunteer Jo Lasky, who was stationed at San Fernando. "It's all volunteer because we care about our community."

According to the Los Angeles Times, winds were easing Tuesday evening, giving hope to some residents that their homes would be spared. However, the cause of the fires has still not been determined.



JONATHAN GIBBY, PHOTO EDITOR / VALLEY STAR

FIGHTING THE BLAZE – Firefighters battle to contain the flames of the Sesnon fire in Porter Ranch Monday night, which has burned close to 5,000 acres and destroyed 19 structures.

Voting Rocks Shocked by Bad Behavior

By ASTRID SEIPELT
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Although it started out as a positive event to muster up new voters for the upcoming presidential election, 'Rock the Vote,' hosted by the Valley College chapters of CALPIRG and M.E.Ch.A., was abruptly brought to an end by noise complaints.

Griffin Johnson, event coordinator intern for CALPIRG, said Disabled Students Programs and Services complained about the noise level of the event. The event was then ended early at approximately 2 p.m. because of the complaints.

"This was supposed to be a good cause and gathering ... We had a great band playing at the beginning of the event and DSP&S was complaining about the noise level," said Johnson. "The advisor from the Associated Student Union came over, told us we had to shut it down. From what my understanding is she had no authority to do that."

"It wasn't us shutting it down, it was more like us asking them not to have the amplified music."

- David Green
associate dean of DSP&S

According to David Green, associate dean of DSP&S, he does not know who from his office made the complaint.

"The music was too loud and was interfering with the daily operation of this office. We have students who come in to see our counselor, and they need an atmosphere that they can communicate in," said Green. "Some of our students have communication deficits and they need to be able to listen clearly."

Elizabeth Ortiz, faculty advisor for the ASU said that the event was not approved until Oct. 9, which may have contributed to the complaints made.

"It wasn't us shutting it down, it was more like us asking them not to have the amplified music, because there were students that were in counseling or taking assessments in the DSP&S office," she said. "[They could] continue with [the] acoustic music but not the amplified music."



JOHN CAMARENA / VALLEY STAR

FIGHT FROM THE SKIES - A Quebec 1 aircraft drops water on a hillside in an attempt to contain the flames threatening homes on the north end of Reseda Boulevard.

Organizers then complied with the request to halt the event, however the band Rebel Head took their equipment to play in the free speech area outside. When questioned by Andrea Barrera, president of the Valley chapter of Democracy Matters, as to why they had set up outside, even though the event had been stopped, a band member told her to "Shut up, you stupid bitch."

Jesse Richardson, the drummer of Rebel Head, feels that the whole situation was blown out of proportion, though they were told to get a permit the next time they wanted to use the area.

"There were three [sheriff's officers] there...if we were having any behavioral issues, they would have said something," he said. "We had no problem with the crowd...we were just trying to play."

Barrera has called into question the usage of the free speech area, and whether permission is needed to use it.

"Student Services said 'yes, they have permission, no, they didn't ask us at all, but they are allowed to go do that'," she said. "So I asked why is it that Democracy Matters and CALPIRG have to come here every single time we want to do voter registration yet

ICE Raids Bring Chill of Fear to Illegal Immigrants

By ANDY ALCARAZ AND
GEORGE BENITEZ
STAFF WRITERS

On Dec. 1, 2007 at approximately 5:45 a.m., Immigration and Customs Enforcement raided the home of a former Valley College student, detaining and eventually deporting his father.

Jonathan Hernandez, who attended Valley during the fall 2007 semester, and his family were awakened when ICE officers knocked on the door of their Pacoima home. They showed Hernandez a photograph and asked him if he recognized the individual.

"There were ten agents.

They said they were the police," Hernandez said. "[ICE] was looking for someone who I'd never heard of before."

With Hernandez's consent, the officers entered the house and began their search. Once inside, they asked for identification from Hernandez, his father and stepmother. After completing their search, the officers took Hernandez's father, who had a previous deportation order, and his stepmother into custody.

"They [ICE] didn't tell me anything, other than they were taking my dad and stepmom to jail," stated Hernandez.

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The case of O.J. Simpson comes down to karma or innocence before guilt. **Opinion, Pg 3**

The Vote for Obama

The youth of America look to the Democratic candidate to lead them into an era of change. **Election '08, Pg 4**

Give Until It Hurts

A little pain now is worth saving the lives of others. **Valley Life, Pg 5**

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The newest addition to the Dodgers. **Sports, Pg 6**

SCOTT MITCHELL, CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER / VALLEY STAR



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VALLEY STAR STAFF

EDITOR IN CHIEF
ASTRID SEIPELT

PHOTO EDITOR
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PARANDZEM GRIGORYAN
ANA ROSA MURILLO

ADVERTISING MANAGER
CHIP RUDOLPH

ADVISERS
BILL DAUBER
ROD LYONS

thevalleystar@yahoo.com
www.lavalleystar.com
(818) 947-2576

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Last Chance to Rock the Vote

BY ASTRID SEIPELT
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Oct. 20 may not seem like an important date to remember, but for Californians wanting to have their say in the upcoming presidential election, this day is the cut-off for voter registration.

According to the California Secretary of State's website, almost 70 percent of eligible persons are registered to vote, but both the California Public Research Interest Group and Valley College's chapter of Democracy Matters, are looking to increase that number.

"We've had a lot of events for voter registration and also for spreading the word about our website, studentvote.org, where people can register online," said CALPIRG campus organizer Kate Farrington. "We've also has a couple events to educate students about the issues - we've had three different debate watching parties that we have hosted along with Democracy Matters, and those have been pretty well attended."

According to CALPIRG's Web site, more than 850,000 young voters turned out for the California presidential primary earlier this year, an increase in almost 50 percent over the 2000 primary, in which approximately 570,000 young adults went to the polls.

Andrea Barrera, president of Democracy

Matters at Valley said that the club plans to pass out information cards this week so voters can be made aware of what to bring with them to the polls.

"We are so lucky to live in a democracy, period. There are people who come here from all over the world to escape repressive regimes," said Barrera. "The only problem with our particular form of democracy is that it only works for the people if the people work for it."

Valley student Rafael Corral volunteered to register voters at previous elections, and gave his time again to assist CALPIRG in mustering up voters on campus.

"I want people to vote to show that the youth of America do care about this election year," said Corral, a nursing major. "The youth want to see a difference, they want to see change in our government."

Students can register to vote in several ways. According to Farrington, the easiest way to register is to speak to a CALPIRG volunteer; club representatives will be on campus Monday through Thursday until the registration deadline. If this is not convenient, registration can also be completed online through studentvote.org. Once the form is filled in online, it is sent to your email address, ready for you to sign and mail in.

"I think people should register to vote..."



JOHN CAMARENA / VALLEY STAR

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD - A volunteer sits on the corner of Fulton Avenue and Burbank Boulevard in hope of passing students and members of the community registering to vote in the Nov. 4 election.

[One reason is] Just to have their voice heard in government and participate in politics," said Farrington. "Even beyond that, it's important for young people to vote just to show that we are participating and that we have the power, and politicians have to pay attention to us."

U.S. citizens can pick up registration forms from public offices, such as a U.S. Post Office, public libraries, or DMV branches. In

order to be eligible to vote in California, you must be 18 years of age by election day, a resident of California and a citizen of the United States, not in prison or on parole for a felony conviction and not have been judged mentally incompetent.

Forms mailed in to Los Angeles County election office must be postmarked no later than Oct. 20 in order to be processed.



ANA ROSA MURILLO / VALLEY STAR

TUNES TO MOTIVATE - Blue Sky Reality was one of three bands to perform in Monarch Hall Tuesday for the Voting Rocks event.

'Voting Rocks'

continued from page 1

they can just go play their loud music without any rules."

There was much confusion regarding whether Rebel Head had permission to use the Free Speech Area, something that ASU president Josh Wible said was down to miscommunication.

"I do not have the authority to make anyone do anything. Whether or not they went out there was

not the problem, the problem was that their behavior when they went out there, they were cursing at people and they were being inappropriate," he said.

Some positives were taken from the event, however. Kate Farrington, event coordinator for CALPIRG at Valley, said that up to 75 students attended, and approximately 20 new voters signed up.

"I still feel [the event] was valuable. We got people registered to vote and the first half of the event went really well, it's just unfortunate that everything ended the way that it did," she said.

'Raids'

continued from page 1

His dad was eventually deported to Guatemala, while his stepmother voluntarily left the country after ICE issued a time frame for her departure.

"I didn't think they were going to take my dad," said Hernandez, who now lives in Los Angeles with his mother. "The only people [ICE] should take are criminals. My dad paid taxes. He volunteered in the community. He didn't do anything illegal."

ICE has been criticized for their procedures when dealing with illegal immigrants. Critics say that their door-to-door tactics have made immigrants believe they were speaking to law enforcement officials.

"We knock on the door, announce ourselves [and] come in if someone responds to questions of consent. We will ask for information from the residents, said Kice. "Is the 'target' inside the residence? If we locate other immigrants, we may take them into custody. If you come here illegally you are subject to arrest."

ICE has arrested approximately 3,247 undocumented immigrants in raids in the United States between late September and early October, according to statistics listed on their Web site. Approximately 1,587 of these arrests were made in California, including in Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Sacramento counties.

The agency is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, responsible for eliminating vulnerabilities in the nation's border and other duties. It's budget is \$5 billion a year, according to their website.

In ICE's 2007 fiscal year they arrested and brought to trial more than 300,000 undocumented immigrants in the United States, many of these cases calling for removal.

"Of those, 100,000 had criminal convictions," said Virginia Kice, a spokesperson for the government agency, citing a figure that equals one-third of the total amount of arrests.

According to Jorge-Mario Cabrera, director of community education and public affairs for the Coalition of Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, Hernandez's account of ICE's actions are similar to those other undocumented immigrants and citizens have experienced.

"ICE seems to think they can easily fool the

American people into believing the U.S. is honestly working on enforcing our country's broken immigration laws," CHIRLA's Executive Director Angelica Salas said in a news release. The question we should all ask is, can an unjust and inhuman law be enforced justly and humanely."

Undocumented immigrants however, are not the only ones dealing with the experiences of ICE. Some citizens are also going through much of these same encounters with the agency and its authorities.

"It sounded like they were going to knock down my door," said a 32-year-old Koreatown man, who wishes to remain anonymous.

When the man asked why they were there, the agents responded by showing the man a photograph and saying that they were looking for a suspected identity thief.

The agents then asked him if they could enter his apartment to search the place.

"I said yes, because I had nothing to hide," he said.

The officers then asked him and his wife about their legal status in the country, the amount of time they had been living at the residence, how long they had been in the country, and if they had their ID's and green cards.

After the ICE agents verified the couple's ID's, an officer asked them where they were from, their reply was Bangladesh. The couple then asked what their country of origin had to do with the search of the individual in the photograph and the agents said nothing; they left after 30 minutes of questioning.


"They didn't leave a business card or a number. I felt harassed," said the Koreatown man.

He did not know which law enforcement agency showed up at his home, so he called the Los Angeles Police Department, but they said that no officers were dispatched to his residence.

"They are misleading the public by making people think that they are local authorities, when in fact they are immigration officers," said Cabrera. "They are given more leeway with their procedures and in identifying themselves."

According to Salas, ICE's procedures continue to tear families apart.

"It makes me sad to remember it," said Hernandez. "You're with your family one day and the next you're not. There are no words for it."



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Sherman Oaks, CA, 91403
Phone: 818-990-0421

Panorama II Store & Donation Center
14600 Roscoe Blvd.
Panorama City, CA, 91402
Phone: 818-892-1231

OPINION

3

O.J. Not So Good for You *Blind Justice For All?*BY ANDY ALCARAZ
STAFF WRITER

The expression on O.J. Simpson's face as Judge Jackie Glass read the jury's verdict from his kidnapping and robbery case in Las Vegas was not worth a thousand words, but rather just three. "Payback's a bitch."

The verdict delivered on Oct. 3, found him guilty on all 12 charges in a Las Vegas robbery where he and a group of men robbed two sports memorabilia dealers at gunpoint in a hotel room.

"Guilty" stated Glass, while delivering Simpson the same verdict twelve times over.

The sense of satisfaction that comes with the court ruling and prospective prison time of Simpson does little to restore faith and trust in the U.S. court system, which failed the people in 1995 when Simpson walked free. However, it does much to reaffirm the belief that there is such a thing in the world as 'karma.'

"You get what you deserve," said Aaron Fonville, an architecture major at Valley College. "After getting off with murder you shouldn't be messing with the law."

Unfortunately for Simpson, there was no "if it doesn't fit, you must acquit" defense put forth by an overpriced 'Dream Team' of lawyers that could have been used to save him. Apparently his book, "If I Did It," the semi-confessional, hypothetical chronicle of how the murders took place, didn't make enough money to afford them.

No hypothetical situations were needed this time around however, as there was audio evidence of Simpson speaking directly to his captive dur-

ing the incident. The audio was published by gossip Website TMZ.com.

"Don't let nobody out of this room. [Expletive], you think you can steal my [stuff] and sell it?" said Simpson in the recording.

The evidence and verdict must not be lost to judicial errors in a time when Simpson's lawyers are trying to get a new trial in the Las Vegas

robbery, according to an AP article.

Though if that new trial were to happen, the prosecution needs to be ready with a rebuttal argument. Perhaps something like "If it's on tape, it's life behind the gate."

Fortunately for everyone, that means you O.J.; try and write a book about this one.

BY SARAH KNOWLES
OPINION EDITOR

Innocence – The state of a person whom lacks any involvement in a sin or crime. In a court of law, innocence leaves the defendant unaccountable for the crime they are acquitted of. Sadly for O.J. Simpson, most of society doesn't seem to under-

stand the definition of innocence. In turn, O.J. has lived with a guilt stamp for thirteen years, before the biased beliefs of most of the nation put the 61-year-old back behind bars.

The double standards the general public has for the so-called fair judicial system is unacceptable and the "just deserts" that O.J. has

received is an absolute disgrace.

"O.J. got what he deserved, everyone knows that. It was a long time coming," said Valley College student Michael Haze "O.J. is a murderer and he needed to go to jail a long time ago."

While the general consensus lies with Haze's opinion, no one seems to agree with the crimes O.J. has now been convicted of, and even those close to the case suggest the football star's treatment was over the top and unfair.

Attorney Yale Galanter told The Associated Press that head jury member Paul Connelley suggested O.J. was guilty of the infamous murders 13 years prior and also cited that the jurors were kept for 13 hours to deliberate, for fear one would suffer some sort of mishap on the way home and be unable to finish the hearing.

As ridiculous as that sounds, this was the man in charge of the all-white jury that sentenced Simpson and wasn't the only member with a biased opinion influencing his own decision.

According to the Los Angeles Times, jury member Fred Jones acknowledged that he believed Simpson murdered his ex-wife Nicole Brown and friend Ron Goldman. While stating all past feelings were put aside for a fair trial, it is hard to see how this could be true in this case that has stirred up plenty of bad blood from the previous trial thirteen years earlier.

As O.J. awaits an appeal that he and his family hope will be fair and honest, only one question should linger with those that have put O.J. behind bars. The question comes from Mr. Galanter to the New York Times; "As horrible as the murders were, and they were a terrible tragedy, just think about this: What if the jury in L.A. got it right, what if O. J. Simpson didn't do it?"



ILLUSTRATION / EDUARDO HERRERA / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

No Freeway Enterprise

■ A proposal to turn freeway signage into commercial advertising is just another distraction

BY ANDY ALCARAZ
STAFF WRITER

Fighting through congestion during the commute to and from work, the last thing California motorists need is any more distractions on the road.

According to a Los Angeles Times news article, a proposal to use Amber Alerts on freeways as advertisement across 674 electronic message boards was put forth by Republican Senator George Runner in late September; a ploy by Sacramento to increase highway funding for the state.

The proposal comes at a time when talking on cell phones while driving has been outlawed, soon to be followed by text messaging. Motorists are required to increase their awareness of all those who take to the road. But state politicians, instead of putting forth a measure to improve the conditions of its message boards, are cutting Californian drivers short in a bill that will more than likely serve as a hindrance than a benefit.

"It could be distracting," said Erika Aceves, a student at Valley College. "If there's something important going on we're not going to know about it. It'll be more of a waste."

The bill, written by Runner and endorsed by Lobbyist Dave Ackerman of Clear Channel Outdoor, will award the winner of a bidding process the right to update the electronic message boards to LED or video screens in order to use them for advertisements. Ackerman is part of

an advertising billboard company that has contributed \$1.2 million over the past five years to state campaigns and politicians, according to the LA Times article.

Whoever wins the bidding will effectively turn weather reports, freeway conditions, and most importantly child abduction information, into trivial matters of policy. The advertisements will more than likely bury the other information essential to most drivers, underneath a mask of brightly colored lights and catchy slogans, placing Californians in a tomb of American capitalism.

"I'm just disgusted by that," said Valley business major Monica Klus. "For cities to be able to help families and have it replaced by advertisements is wrong. That's the opposite."

Should this bill ever make it into an official piece of legislation, it is important for California voters to know the consequences and truths of the measure. The costs of it may not just simply be an annoying distraction on the road or a few extra dollars in the pockets of some greedy politicians, but rather a whole downplay and withdraw on the nature of communication. Important and critical information that needs to be effectively communicated to drivers would be lost in a whirlwind of consumer endorsements.

The last thing Californians want to see on their way home is a message saying that a child has been abducted, underneath the picture of a smiling Ronald McDonald in bright yellow overalls taking a bite of a Big Mac. Some things are too much.

CAMPUS VIEW: Was O.J. Simpson's guilty verdict deserved?

Photos by Scott Mitchell, Chief Photographer



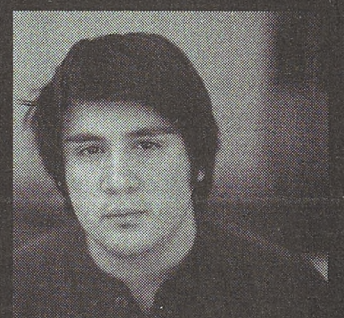
"It was deserved, definitely. I think he is guilty and should spend the rest of his life in jail."

- Karolina Walczyk
art history

"I think it was a fair trial. I guess it just depends on the jury and their state of mind when they delivered the verdict."

- Robert Mota
aviation

"I think it was probably justified. He probably got what he deserved, but no-one really knows the truth but him."

- Itzel Reyes
nursing

"He did the crime. I think the judge did the right thing. The murders and last trial were irrelevant."

- Jorge Naldouado
economics

Money For Workers, Not Inmates

BY SASHA SANTACRUZ
STAFF WRITER

As we try and figure out which Presidential Candidate will provide us with better health care coverage, California has already been ordered to give \$8 billion towards prison health care.

Medical care in California's prisons has been ruled unconstitutional. U.S. District Judge Thelton Henderson appointed J. Clark Kelso to run the prison

medical system after finding that an average of one inmate a week was dying from neglect or malpractice.

While neglect and malpractice are serious issues, dealing with them shouldn't mean throwing more money into the system. Instead, we should focus on improving the reasons behind it, such as the lack of employees or unprepared doctors. This would leave the billions to those law-abiding citizens without health insurance.

According to a report by Families USA, more than eight people die each day in California because they don't have health insurance.

"I guess it sucks that as a country we don't all have health care," said Valley College Sociology major Jessica Ruiz. "Everyone should have it, not just inmates."

Our state still doesn't know how to fund the plan to fix the national health care system, and as a result state funds are bound to suffer. Judge Henderson says he is likely to order the state to pay \$250 million as a first installment for prison healthcare. Kelso stated that he needs that amount to start designing three new medical and mental health units for approximately 175,000 adult inmate patients.

It's ridiculous that criminals have the luxury of mental, medical and dental benefits, but middle-class workers have no coverage. Health and well-being is key and inmates should have the right to receive the proper care, but in the current financial climate, we need to determine what is best for the state.

Due to the tragic economy, many Americans work hard everyday minus health insurance and cannot afford to miss a day of work. When we're ill, going to the doctors can be scary situation, not because of the check up, but because of the price. Being given a prescription for your ailment only makes a doctor's visit worse.

"They should be giving it to the people that need it the most," said Valley student Mayra Hernandez.

When comparing the average American to a prison inmate, most would agree the money being put into the prisons should go straight to the one not behind bars.



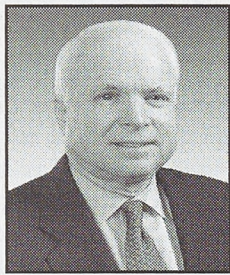
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Contact The Valley Star at thevalleystar@yahoo.com, drop by the newsroom at BJ114 or call us at (818) 947-2576.

Letters should be limited to 300 words and may be edited for publication.

ELECTION '08

TALE OF THE TAPE
VOTING RECORDS
JOHN MCCAIN

ECONOMY

"I have fought against excessive spending my entire career. We've let government get completely out of control."

- Voted YES on \$40B in reduced federal overall spending on Medicaid, Medicare, agriculture, employee pensions, conservation, and student loans. (Dec 2005)
- Voted NO on prioritizing national debt reduction below tax cuts. (Apr 2000)
- NO on spending \$448B of tax cut on education & debt reduction. (Apr 2001)

ENERGY & OIL

"Attack the energy problem on every front."

- YES on defunding renewable and solar energy. (Jun 1999)
- YES on targeting 100,000 hydrogen-powered vehicles by 2010. (Jun 2003)
- YES on removing consideration of drilling ANWR from budget bill. (Mar 2003)
- Voted NO on reducing oil usage by 40 percent by 2025 (instead of 5 percent). (Jun 2005)
- YES on preserving budget for ANWR oil drilling. (Apr 2000)

IMMIGRATION

"Make possible for immigrants to do a job Americans won't do."

- YES on allowing more foreign workers into the US for farm work. (Jul 1998)
- YES on building a fence along the Mexican border. (Sep 2006)
- YES on declaring English as the official language of the US government. (Jun 2007)
- YES on limit welfare for immigrants. (Jun 1997)
- YES on giving Guest Workers a path to citizenship. (May 2006)

HEALTH CARE

"Family should make health decisions, not federal government."

- NO on including prescription drugs under Medicare. (Jun 2000)
- NO on expanding enrollment period for Medicare Part D. (Feb 2006)
- YES on limiting self-employment health deduction. (Jul 1999)
- YES on increasing Medicaid rebate for producing generics. (Nov 2005)
- YES on funding GOP version of Medicare prescription drug benefit. (Apr 2001)

IRAQ WAR

"The War on Terror is a fight between good and evil."

- Voted NO on redeploying non-essential US troops out of Iraq in 9 months. (Dec 2007)
- Voted NO on redeploying troops out of Iraq by July 2007. (Jun 2006)
- Voted NO on investigating contract awards in Iraq & Afghanistan. (Nov 2005)
- Voted YES on \$86 billion for military operations in Iraq & Afghanistan. (Oct 2003)
- Voted YES on requiring on-budget funding for Iraq, not emergency funding. (Apr 2005)

EDUCATION

"I want schools to answer to parents and students."

- Voted NO on \$52M for "21st century community learning centers". (Oct 2005)
- Voted NO on national education standards. (Feb 1994)
- Voted NO on \$5B for grants to local educational agencies. (Oct 2005)

Commentary



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY EDUARDO HERRERA/ SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Young Obama Voters Follow Message

■ The Illinois senator is proving his ability to engage the youth vote in the November election.

BY SASHA SANTACRUZ
STAFF WRITER

When someone speaks out regarding issues that are of concern to us, we begin to listen. If we like what we hear we show interest in that person and their views. For the presidential election, it seems that young voters are seeing Barack Obama as one of those people.

Recent studies have shown that young adults are voting for Obama. A USA TODAY/MTV/ Gallup Poll of registered voters 18 to 29 years old shows Democrat Barack Obama with 61 percent support and Republican John McCain at 32 percent.

Some questions asked in the poll, such as who would you rather have a beer with or have as a teacher, were obviously geared towards young people and give older readers the impression that we shouldn't be taken seriously. We should be concerned with the war, education, health care and retirement, not some fictional world.

Obama's supporters feel empowerment through his eloquent speeches. Young voters are about change, progress, direct connection and aren't too concerned with his inexperience, but rather what he hopes to offer because they believe it can be done. He captures a younger

audience with his enticing political messages, interactive website and how can we forget, announcing his vice presidential running mate through text messaging.

"He focuses more on students and his speeches are always on education and is persistent, so we relate," said Valley College student Romie Frouiti.

At the website Onteenstoday.com, five reasons are listed as to why young voters are choosing Obama. The number one reason was him being 47 years old. Followed by his age was Obama 'making the youth feel important', 'he pushes change', he uses net-generation tools' and 'he is good looking'.

It seems that some voters who are considering Obama see him as a Mr. Rogers figure for the White House; friend, loyal neighbor, someone they enjoy watching. Let's just trust these voters aren't following him like a trend of skinny jeans, but for the \$50 billion to jumpstart the economy and preventing 1 million Americans from losing their jobs, or a national health insurance program that provides affordable insurance for everyone.

A higher percentage of young registered voters will be heading to the booths and hopefully it will be with knowledge of what Obama stands for: Change.

Commentary

Will The Real Candidates Please Stand Up

■ The real facts behind the facades of fancy speaking are explored through voting records from both candidates.

BY ANDY ALCARAZ
STAFF WRITER

It's easy to get lost in the circus that is American politics these days. The candidates from both sides spend more time attacking each other's image than they do discussing their policies. Even in both recent presidential debates it was hard to discern exactly what each candidate stood for.

"[The financial crisis] is a final verdict of the failed economic policies of the last eight years strongly promoted by President Bush and supported by Senator McCain," said Barack Obama in the second presidential debate when asked about an approach to heal the economy.

The result of the nominees playing this political blame game is a failure in information exchange from candidate to voter. The issues continue to get buried underneath the rhetoric and jargon put forth.

"[Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac] were the ones, with the encouragement of Senator Obama and his cronies and his friends in Washington that went out and made all these risky

loans," John McCain said when asked about the true nature of the bailout, also at the second debate.

With the situation as it is, the time for a clear and concise definition on where each candidate stands on the important issues has come. For this, their voting records must be looked to.

In 2008, Obama, in an issue on tax reform, voted yes on a resolution that would call for higher federal income taxes on a single, non-homeowner that earns \$42,000 a year. The resolution would not affect families of four earning \$90,000 or couples earning \$83,000 jointly. McCain in the meantime, continually pushes the point that Barack Obama will raise taxes. Obama admits this, saying it will only affect people with incomes of more than a quarter of \$1 million. In 2008, Obama voted yes on increasing the tax rate for people earning more than \$1 million a year.

Meanwhile John McCain, on the issue of tax reform, continually insist that he will not raise taxes. He falls in line here. In 2003 he voted against a \$350 billion tax break that would have provided states with \$20 billion, half of that amount being mandatorily designated

to Medicaid, while the other half would have been used as the state saw fit. Also in 1998 he voted for a budget resolution that would require a super-majority for raising taxes.

On the economy, Obama says he will fight for the middle class. In 2007 he voted against bringing down the federal debt because of the programs it would affect. In 2005 he voted against \$40 billion in reduced federal spending that would cut funding in Medicaid, Medicare, students loans, agriculture, employee pensions, conservation, and student loans. McCain voted for these issues.

McCain on economy, also states that he has fought against spending his entire career. In 2001 he voted against spending \$448 billion worth of tax cuts on education and debt reduction.

As far as oil and energy are concerned, Obama says he plans to alleviate America's reliance on foreign oil and is a proponent of alternative energy. In 2005 he voted for a bill reducing oil usage by 40 percent. In 2007 he also voted yes on factoring global warming into federal project planning.

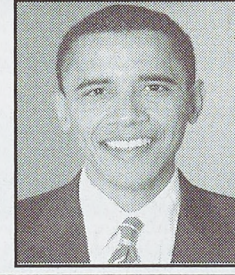
All the while McCain, famous for

"drill, baby drill," states that he plans to attack the energy crisis on every front. In 1999, he voted yes on defunding renewable and solar energy and in 2005 voted against the same 40 percent reduction in oil usage that Obama voted for.

The issues on war for the two candidates is also disparaging. In 2007, Obama voted against McCain in a measure on redeploying troops out of Iraq by March 2008. Also in 2005, McCain voted against a measure on investigating contract awards in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama voted for it.

All things considered, these voting records should provide some evidence as to what candidate voters will actually be getting. So while it's important to look forward to what the presidential nominees say they will do, it's also important to look back at what they have already done.

Obama said at the second debate, "You're not interested in hearing politicians point fingers. What you're interested in is trying to figure out how is this going to affect you." The candidates voting records are hopefully a tool that will allow us to.

TALE OF THE TAPE
VOTING RECORDS
BARACK OBAMA

ECONOMY

"The fundamentals of the economy have to be measured by whether or not the middle class is getting a fair shake. I intend to restore a sense of accountability and regulatory oversight over the financial markets."

- Voted NO on paying down federal debt by rating programs' effectiveness. (Mar 2007)
- Voted NO on \$40B in reduced federal overall spending Medicaid, Medicare, agriculture, employee pensions, conservation, and student loans. (Dec 2005)

ENERGY & OIL

"We cannot drill our way out of our addiction to oil."

- YES on reducing oil usage by 40 percent by 2025 (instead of 5%). (Jun 2005)
- YES on disallowing an oil leasing program in Alaska's ANWR. (Nov 2005)
- YES on banning drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. (Mar 2005)
- YES on factoring global warming into federal project planning. (May 2007)
- YES on removing oil & gas exploration subsidies. (Jun 2007)

IMMIGRATION

"Let's be a nation of laws AND a nation of immigrants."

- Voted YES on comprehensive immigration reform. (Jun 2007)
- Voted YES on building a fence along the Mexican border. (Sep 2006)
- Voted YES on allowing illegal aliens to participate in Social Security. (May 2006)
- Voted NO on declaring English as the official language of the US government. (Jun 2007)
- Voted YES on giving Guest Workers a path to citizenship. (May 2006)

HEALTH CARE

"Health care is a right; something's fundamentally wrong now."

- NO on means-testing to determine Medicare Part D premium. (Mar 2008)
- YES on increasing Medicaid rebate for producing generics. (Nov 2005)
- YES on negotiating bulk purchases for Medicare prescription drug. (Mar 2005)
- YES on expanding enrollment period for Medicare Part D. (Feb 2006)
- YES on requiring negotiated Rx prices for Medicare part D. (Apr 2007)

IRAQ WAR

"End the war, and end the mindset that got us into war."

- Voted to fund war until 2006; now wants no blank check. (Nov 2007)
- Voted YES on redeploying US troops out of Iraq by March 2008. (Mar 2007)
- Voted NO on redeploying troops out of Iraq by July 2007. (Jun 2006)
- Voted YES on investigating contract awards in Iraq & Afghanistan. (Nov 2005)

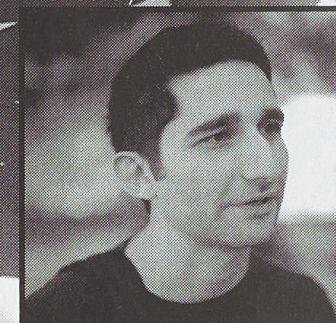
EDUCATION

"We need a sense of urgency about improving education system."

- Voted YES on \$52M for "21st century community learning centers". (Oct 2005)
- Voted YES on \$5B for grants to local educational agencies. (Oct 2005)
- Voted YES on shifting \$11B from corporate tax loopholes to education. (Mar 2005)

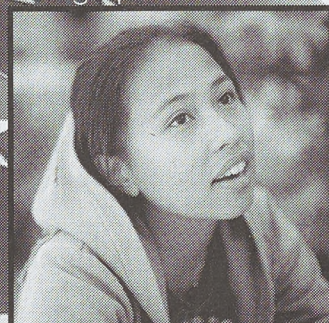
ELECTION VIEW.

Photos by Scott Mitchell, Chief Photographer



"I'm not eligible to vote. I don't believe in the voting system...in general, politicians are corrupted."

-Gary Atchabedian, 30
computer science



"Yes, I think it's an important thing for my future...whatever the outcome is, I have to be involved in it, especially nowadays with the economy how it is."

-Janice Hao, 26
biochemistry



"I was 18 when I registered, to vote for [John] Kerry...I vote, because the propositions make a difference, although it is always toward the majority."

-Jordan Klein, 23
public relations



"Yes. Of course it's important to register, because everyone needs to vote, so you can have who you need as the president."

-Gary Nunez, 21
liberal arts

Are you registered to vote? Why or why not?

VALLEY LIFE

5

On Campus

It's My First Time... Sort of

■ Valley College students donate at recent blood drive for extra credit or just because.

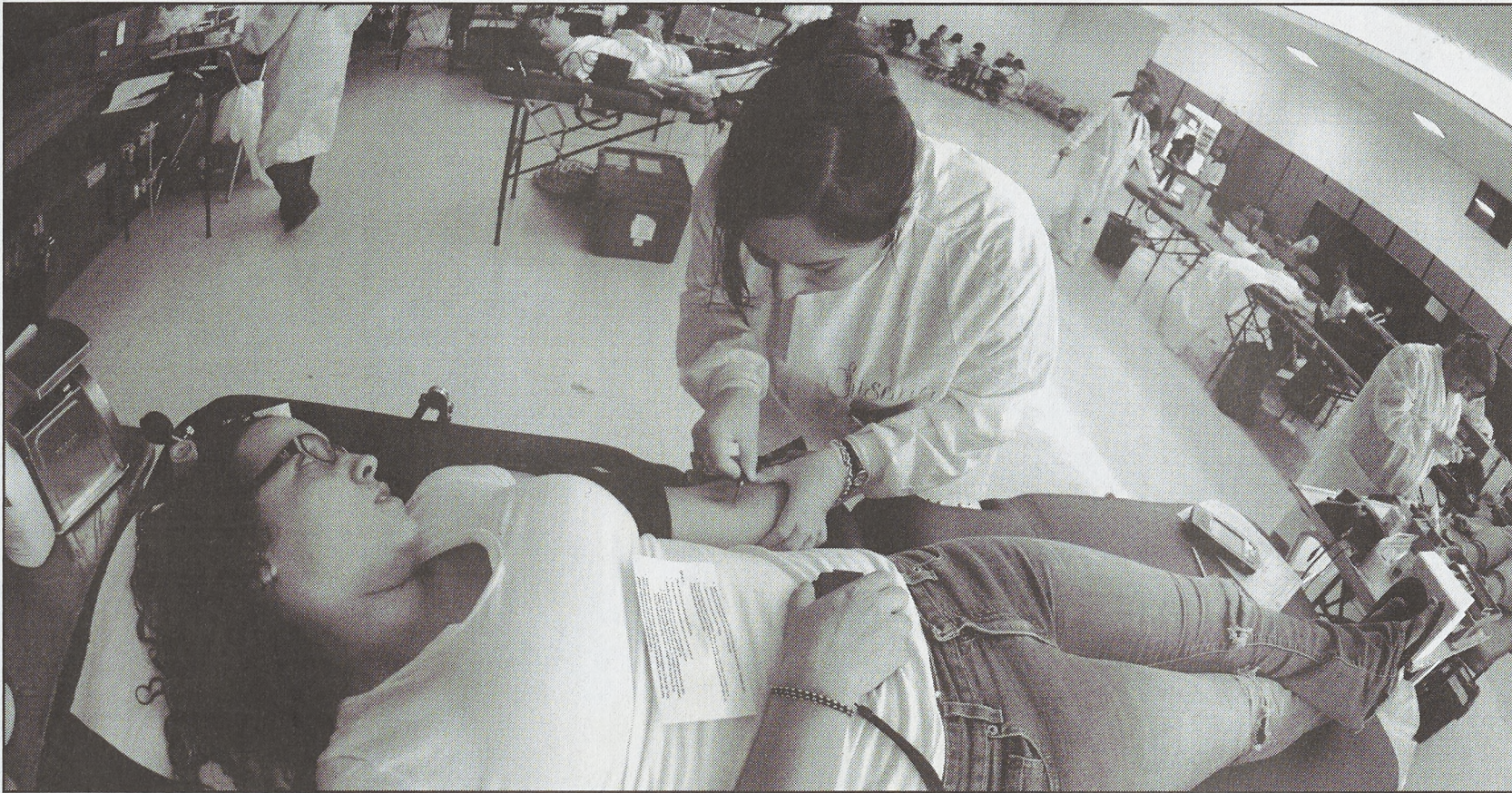
BY LAUREN LEES
STAFF WRITER

Walking past Monarch Hall Oct. 7, students may have noticed a big Red Cross van parked right outside its double glass sliding door, indicating there was yet another blood drive here on-campus.

The last time I attempted to donate blood, I tested anemic and could not go any further than the prescreening exam, and I left bummed out that I missed out on receiving the extra credit for my class.

Since then, this has been my first opportunity to donate and running solely on a Monster energy drink, I walked inside to our ice-cold auditorium, which looked like a mini-medical unit with eight gurneys creating a small square in front of the stage. While the stench of hospital hit my nose upon entering, I anxiously walked to the registration desk to sign in.

Kiosha Engleberg, a Red Cross technician, handed me a pre-registration materials packet, which described the entire



Moment Of Truth—A Red Cross medical technician inserts the needle into Lauren Lees' arm during the on campus blood drive held in Monarch Hall on Tuesday.

process from the pre-screening process to the blood donation, including getting my blood pressure taken, an anemia test, and answering questions about my sexual activity and medicine intake.

While I waited to meet with a technician, I conducted a quick and completely unscientific survey with the other seven students waiting in line. Of the seven, who were there for extra credit, one, sophomore Beatriz Mada, was there to give, just like someone else had for her family.

"About two years ago if it wasn't for a blood transfusion that my sister got, she would have died... and I feel that I owe the community, and then it's just a bonus to get extra credit."

During my wait, I noticed two of the gurneys were hooked up to a big shiny machine, called Alyx. Alyx is a new blood donating machine in the industry that

"About two years ago if it wasn't for a blood transfusion that my sister got, she would've died."

—Beatriz Mada
Sophomore

takes the red blood cells from your blood, and sends the plasma back in. I immediately wanted to use it, but the catch with Alyx is you have to have either O positive, O negative or A and B

negative blood.

When I met with my technician, Manny Aquino, he informed me that I have O positive blood, which meant I was eligible for the Alyx machine, however, for women, you must weigh at least 175 pounds, which I do not.

Disappointed, he tested me for anemia, which is when a person's hemoglobin count is below 12.5. One painful little prick later, my count tested at 13.3, which made me eligible to donate.

As I laid down on a gurney to get my blood taken, my nerves hit me, while Susana Hernandez, another technician, checked by blood pressure, tapped a vein, and cleaned off the area. She tried to comfort me, right before

she stuck me with a needle causing a slight stinging, followed by a burning sensation.

The average blood donation time takes ten minutes, and as I lay there, I was singing to "Stand Be Me" on the radio hoping to sing the pain away.

Ten minutes and a pint of blood later, Susana cleaned and bandaged me up, told me to drink many fluids and eat within the next 5 hours.

I left with a package of Nutter Butters, Chips Ahoy and two half-pint bottles of water in my purse and a shiny button saying "It's my first time" on my shirt. Walking out of Monarch Hall, I happily dreamed about how two hours out of my day could save someone's life.

Valley People

Runway Model Turned Model Student

■ TAE president leaves life of glamorous fashion for academic passion.

BY LAUREN LEES
STAFF WRITER

While leaning against a table ledge, his big blue eyes roam through what's left of Monarch Square as he recounts his days as a professional male model.

"I remember my first day there I was lost around Brooklyn with my two suitcases. Some guys didn't even speak English there."

He slips his hand over his wavy hair, missing a little lock resting above his left

eye. At 26 years old, Patrick Thompson, who grew up in St. Charles Illinois, started modeling as an attempt to break into the world of acting.

During his career, he has walked the runway for Louis Vuitton and landed the cover of the 'International Herald Tribune'. Incidentally, it was his first cover job, that got him noticed from within his family.

"My uncle saw the cover and called my dad to ask if I was modeling," he laughs.

The excitement of his new job quickly wore off, leaving him with the memories of working with modeling stars such as Locus Baben and living with 15 guys in a New York loft.

"It was exciting, crazy at times, Europe and stuff, meeting interesting people. It was not quite as romantic as I thought it would be," he said.

Thompson, a deep fan of the arts, realized modeling could not satisfy him anymore and started at Valley College as a humanities and theology major.

"I wanted more than modeling could offer."

Currently in his fourth semester, Thompson has not given up on his dreams for the screen, and still auditions for work when not in class. He has landed commercial jobs for KSWISS, Snickers, and even took part in an Armenian commercial.

His brother Steve Thompson says of his little brother, "I think it's cool, he's had some success and I'm happy for



Not Just Another Pretty Face—TAE President Patrick Thompson focuses on academics after modeling stint in New York.

him, acting is his main thing, and he's getting the experience."

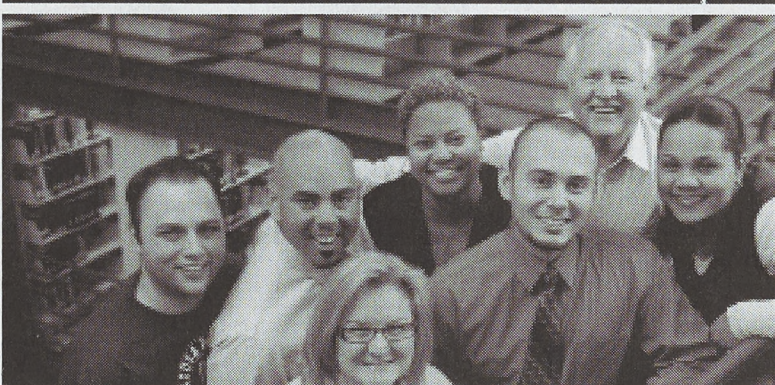
Thompson does not look nor act like a model, in fact it's the last thing you would expect of him, but through his campus involvement he leaves an impression of someone smart and relaxed, enjoying himself in a classroom.

He is the current president of TAE, Tau Alpha Epsilon, Valley's only honor

society, and the longest standing club on campus. He is also on the speech team for the fall. He plans to transfer the fall of 2009, but where, who knows. His passion in life still involves screen acting, but his laid back attitude prevents him from worrying about the what-if's and his next major gig.

"It will all work out", he says with a shrug of his shoulders.

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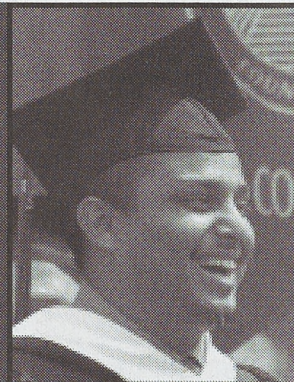
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TOP 5 STORIES

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Fighting For A Cause At The Palin Rally

By Lauren Lees

Journey Tour Ends In L.A.

By Scott Mitchell

Second Time Is A Charm For Wall St.

By Joe LaFleur

Palin Rides "Road To Victory" Tour Into Carson

By Sharon Hardwick

Obama Sets Up Shop In The Valley

By H.Gore/ Scott Mitchell

LAVC EVENTS

Wednesday, October 15

"Untidy: the Worlds of Doug Harvey" Artist Reception & Discussion @ 7 p.m. (Art Gallery) Contact: (818) 778-5536 <http://www.lavc.edu/arts/artgallery.html>

Thursday, October 16

Parent & Baby Session (for Infants) @ 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Bungalow 49); Free – Contact: Family Resource Center (818) 778-5528 weislekml@lavc.edu

Theatre Arts Department Presents "Lucky Stiff" @ 8 p.m. (Music Building Recital Hall); Cost: \$10-\$15

Friday, October 17

Parent & Baby Session (for Toddlers) @ 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Bungalow 49); Free – Contact: Family Resource Center (818) 778-5528 weislekml@lavc.edu

Theatre Arts Department Presents "Lucky Stiff" @ 8 p.m. (Music Building Recital Hall); Cost: \$10-\$15

Saturday, October 18

Cooperative Education "Job Search/Interviews" Seminar @ 9 a.m.-12 p.m. (Bungalow 9) – Contact: Cooperative Education (818) 947-2333

Sunday, October 19

Music Department Presents "LAVC Choir Concert Dr. Michael Arshagouni, director Glenn Carlos, director" @ 7 p.m. (Mainstage Theatre); Cost: \$10-\$15 - Contact: (818) 947-2350

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Wednesday, October 15

How to Transfer Workshop 1-2pm
Undecided Major/Career Workshop 5:30-6:30pm

Thursday, October 16

UC Santa Barbara Rep 10am-1pm
UC Los Angeles Rep 9am-3pm
Undecided Major/Career Workshop 1-2pm



Additional content online - Go to www.lavalleystar.com

SPORTS
REPORTFOOTBALL
PACIFIC
CONFERENCE

COLLEGE	PC	ALL
Antelope Valley*	2-0	2-3
Valley*	1-1	2-3
West L.A.	1-1	2-3
Pierce	1-1	1-4
Southwest*	1-1	1-4
Santa Barbara*	1-1	1-4
Santa Monica*	0-1	1-4
East L.A.*	0-2	0-5

* Indicates a bye last week

WATER POLO
WESTERN STATE
CONFERENCE
MEN

COLLEGE	WSC	ALL
Ventura	2-0	11-8
Cuesta	1-0	12-8
Citrus	1-1	8-13
Valley	0-1	9-10
Santa Monica	0-1	2-14

WOMEN

COLLEGE	WSC	ALL
Citrus	2-0	9-9
Cuesta	1-0	7-15
Ventura	1-1	9-7
Valley	0-1	13-6
Santa Monica	0-2	0-6

SOCCER
WESTERN STATE
CONFERENCE
SOUTH
WOMEN

COLLEGE	WSC	ALL
Bakersfield	4-0	8-3-1
Pierce	3-0-1	9-2-3
Santa Monica	2-1-1	6-1-4
Glendale	2-1-1	5-3-3
Canyons	2-2	3-10
Mission	1-2-1	4-7-1
Citrus	0-4	4-8-2
Valley	0-4	2-9-2

Lady Monarchs Come Close, But not Enough

■ The Valley College soccer team suffer a one-point home loss to Glendale, bringing their season 2-9-2

By H. GORE
STAFF WRITER

The Lady Vaqueros of Glendale Community College used early scoring and timely goalkeeping to hold off Valley College 2-1 Friday afternoon at Monarch Stadium.

Two early goals were the deciding factor in a game that was tightly contested throughout. The Lady Monarchs defense was continuously threatened by the nice ball play of GCC.

The Vaqueros scored twice in the first half, with one of those being made by Catalina Sanchez. "I wish we had scored another one," said Sanchez. "We're really moving the ball and trying hard and that's why we won. We needed to score two more because we had the chance, but Valley played good and stopped us."

The Vaqueros kept constant pressure on the Lady Monarchs defense with good passing and



SCOTT MITCHELL, CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER / VALLEY STAR

PRESSING OFFENSE - Valley College freshman Monica Vargas fights for control of the ball deep inside the Vaquero defense during a hard fought 3-1 loss against Glendale College at Monarch Stadium Friday.

the outstanding play of Sanchez. Her speed and aggressiveness made her seem a level above the other players.

Valley's lone goal was scored in the second half as a result

of a penalty kick. Noelle Arias was taken down by two Glendale defenders in the penalty box, giving Marisol Huerta the chance to power a shot through the hands of the Glendale goalkeeper. The

goal was Huerta's third of the season and brought Valley within one score of the Vaqueros.

"I felt like the whole team was backing me up before the shot," said Huerta. "I knew if I made

it we're only down 2-1 and we could still win the game."

Monarchs' goalie Jocelyn Mercado held the Vaqueros scoreless in the second half, but it was Glendale goalie Monica Rosales' save of Yerica Maravilla's game-tying attempt that sealed the match for GCC.

Valley Head Coach Shane

"We just came up short. I thought we pushed the game, we took the game to them in the second half."

- Shane Watkins

Watkins believes a few early errors were the difference in the game.

"We came out a little flat in the first half, we made a few mistakes and they cost us," said Watkins. "We had a great second half. We just came up short. I thought we pushed the game, we took the game to them in the second half."

Low Temps Freeze Out Polo Men

■ A chilly day in the water leads the Monarch Water Polo Men to a loss

By H. GORE
STAFF WRITER

The Mt. San Antonio College Mounties visited a windy and chilly Valley College Saturday and left with a well-earned 15-9 victory. The players estimated that the temperature in the pool was 55 degrees, and they quickly covered up whenever they weren't in the water.

"It was a good game, but it was cold," said Mounties leading scorer for the game, Ryan Allred. "I haven't played in a pool that cold in a long time."

Despite being physically cold Mt. SAC started the game red hot and went into halftime with an 8-1 lead. Ryan Allred had two of his five goals in the first quarter, and four different Mounties scored in the second.

Valley had multiple scoring chances in the first half, but was

only able to cash in once. The missed opportunities often led to scores for the Mounties such as goalie Terrance Tsai passing to a streaking Chris Hernandez for a quick strike.

"It was a good game, but it was cold. I haven't played in a pool that cold in a long time."

- Mounties player
Ryan Allred

The Monarchs outscored Mt. SAC 8-7 in the second half, but the deficit from the first two quarters was too much to overcome. Freshmen Zach Cook and John Hicks each scored twice for

Valley after halftime, and Jarrod Przebeida helped the defense tighten up in the third and fourth quarters. The Monarchs pulled within five of the Mounties at 11-6 and 12-7, but Mt. SAC answered quickly both times to keep the rally in check.

Head coach Jim McMillan wishes the team would have sustained the same intensity throughout the game.

"We've been training real hard, we're getting better, but we need to learn how to play four quarters," said McMillan. "We're starting to understand the game a little bit better, and we're getting to the point now where we don't have to think so much and we can react."

The loss moves the Monarchs to 9-10 overall and 0-1 in the conference. The men hit the pool again on Wednesday when they host Citrus College.



SCOTT MITCHELL, CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER / VALLEY STAR

NO TIME TO REST - The Mount San Antonio College mens water polo team kept the Monarch goalkeeper busy during Valley's loss 15-9 to the talented visiting team on Saturday.

Cross Country Team Ready to Pounce

■ With strength and determination, the Valley College Cross Country team is ready to take on the Western State Conference

By OSCAR CHICAS
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

When thinking of fall sports, our thoughts turn to the old favorite of gridiron. With football's monopolization of the sports page, we tend to forget those other athletes who also battle and lay haste on the grassy pitch, like the Valley College Cross Country team.

Like the lion mascot representing the Monarchs, the team has adopted a pack mentality and is ready to pounce on their rivals in the Western State Conference this season.

With early success at the Moorpark Invitational, where the men finished in second place with 33 points, and shattering personal records left and right at the Golden West Invitational, the season is rapidly shifting into overdrive.

"When they see winning, it helps," said men's head coach Francois Wolman. "It also helps that our front runner is running way faster."

Sophomore Andrew Salg is

dominating the WSC, with two first-place finishes at Moorpark and the Southern California Preview in Bakersfield. He also recorded two second placings at the Ventura and Golden West Invitational, the latter being the site for his new personal record of 20:09 shattering his previous PR of 22:10 in a four-mile race.

"We're working hard because we want it bad, each week we get better. Our goal is a conference title" said Coach Wolman.

"When they see winning, it helps. It also helps that our front runner is running way faster."

- Francois Wolman

Training has been integral this season, with the men clocking 11.5 miles on a challenging day and six miles in less arduous training sessions. Salg is an excellent example of the hard work the team is putting in, with the sophomore saying he is registering 70 to 80 miles a week.

Apart from Salg, Coach Wolman has found a strong runner in freshman Waldo Jimenez. Jimenez has maintained close proximity in the last leg of races with a second place finish at

Moorpark, 15th at Ventura, 23rd at Golden West, and 20th at Bakersfield.

"So far it's been a fun season. Training is pretty hard compared to high school. It's much harder, stronger and longer" said freshman Waldo Jimenez.

As of week six, the men's team is ranked 12th in Southern California and are waiting to pounce on rivals Glendale College, who are currently ranked eighth.

"We want to win and take it away from Glendale," said Coach Wolman. "We're going for the jugular."

Valley ran a strong meet at the Western State Conference Prelim at Cresenta Valley Park Friday, with Andrew Salg leading the pack with a first place win. Salg registered a time of 21:00 minutes on the over four-mile course. Waldo Jimenez came in 14th with a time of 22:10.

Overall the Monarch men placed fifth in the team standings, with 121 points.

Londy Ponciano was the best placed female for Valley, coming in 14th with a time of 21:14.7. The women placed fourth in the team event out of 13 teams.

The Monarchs next compete Oct. 17 at the Mt. SAC Invitational, located at Mt. San Antonio College at 10 a.m.

SPORTS OPINION

In Los Angeles, Manny's The Man

■ Dodgers Outfielder Manny Ramirez brings swagger and a playoff spot

By JOE LAFLEUR
STAFF WRITER

He stands as far back in the batters box as he can, right foot hugging the white line that borders the back edge. Focusing on the pitchers release point, he waits patiently until the last possible moment to begin his swing, giving him more time to recognize the pitch.

He gently strides forward and then uncoils like spring twisted past its breaking point. His hands move through the hitting zone quickly, generating enough force to crush a pitch traveling 95 mph. Simply put, Manny Ramirez playing baseball is one of the most beautiful things to watch.

"I think Manny is excited to be here, and he shows it. He's just like a kid playing baseball in the backyard. And he knows he's the best kid on the block. Absolutely nothing fazes him."

- Casey Blake

In an interview with Sports Illustrated, Casey Blake, who was also acquired mid-season, said, "I think Manny is excited to be here, and he shows it. He's just like a kid playing baseball in the backyard. And he knows he's the best kid on the block. Absolutely nothing fazes him."

Measuring in at 6 feet tall and 200 pounds, Ramirez has always been a dangerous hitter and a future Hall of Fame ball player. His numbers speak for themselves, hitting .314 lifetime with 527 regular season home runs and 1,725 RBIs. In the post season, he has hit 26 home runs, a Major League Baseball

record, and has 67 RBIs.

During the 100 games he played this season with the Boston Red Sox, Ramirez hit .299 with 20 home runs and 68 RBIs. In the 53 games he's played with the Dodgers, he's hit .396 with 19 home runs and 53 RBIs and is being talked about for the National League MVP. The man can flat out rake.

What Ramirez has brought to the Dodgers is a certain swagger that L.A. hasn't seen since Kirk Gibson, Orel Hershiser and the World Series Championship team of 1988.

When the Dodgers swept the Cubs out of the playoffs with ease, there was one apparent difference when looking at the players in the two teams dugouts. The Dodgers were having fun and the Cubs looked like they were stuck in a cubicle at a job they didn't like. He has allowed his team to relax, taking pressure off the hitters who can now rely on him to come through in the clutch. He has eased the minds of pitchers who can be assured they will have run support with him in the lineup.

Since Ramirez arrived on July 31, the Dodgers have seen more results than just an improved record and a playoff berth. According to the Los Angeles Times, attendance at Dodger Stadium has increased 10.6 percent, from an average of 43,529 per game to 49,454. Those famous dreadlock headpieces that are being sold at souvenir stands throughout the stadium have brought in \$75,000 in sales and the Dodgers have sold 15,000 units of other Manny memorabilia. Dodgers' fans love him, and he seems to share that passion.

There is no doubt that Ramirez has revived a town that had pushed baseball aside for other sports such as basketball. Dodger nation is back and this season, more than any other, Randy Newman's song, "I Love L.A." that plays after every home win, has never rung so true in the hearts of Dodger fans.